

## Ep #035: When Narcissists Become Your Normal And How to Break the Cycle



Vulnerable  
to Valuable

Podcast

HAPPY TODAY'S DAY

Diana Lammerts

*"When Narcissists  
become your  
normal, and how to  
break the cycle"*

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### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Rosie Aiello

## Ep #035: When Narcissists Become Your Normal And How to Break the Cycle

Have you ever moved across the country or oceans to be with the one you love? Did you sell everything? What did you give up?

She gave up an opportunity she had waited her whole life for. She didn't know it then, but she was under the spell of a narcissist.

Hi, I'm Rosie Aiello and welcome to the Vulnerable to Valuable Podcast. We talk about moving forward after experiencing narcissistic, controlling, demeaning and abusive relationships. If you've been in one of those like me, you KNOW what I'm talking about. You are not alone. You've been through some painful stuff ... shame, blame, that inner bully inside you. My mission is to lift and inspire you ... give you the ways you can reclaim your voice and value, your confidence, and the courage to BE the new empowered you.

Diana Lammerts is German who after months and months of work finally got her visa to work in the United States for a company she dreamed about. Little did she know that within a short time she'd give up her dream and follow an American man back to her home country.

We're going to talk with Diana Lammerts in a moment, and first a mini masterclass ...

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I share these mini masterclasses to show you a path to reclaiming your voice, value and confidence. To looking at yourself in a new, deeper way.

Today I'm going to highlight some of the key characteristics of a narcissist and the path women take. I'll be pulling directly from the interview with my guest today.

I am going to discuss these so that you know what they are, that you're not alone in your experience, that nothing is wrong with YOU, and that you DIDN'T do anything wrong. You may wonder, "If I'm so smart how could I have gotten into this kind of relationship?"

Spoiler alert. It has nothing to do with your intelligence. You are not stupid.

See how many experiences you've had that match my guest's.

I was talking to her. I want you to listen to her words when she's actually putting them in the context. I'm going to be pulling them out now, but listen to what she says.

She said, "If someone is pursuing you for six months every day and is so kind, that must be the one. If someone is really in love with you and doesn't take no for an answer."

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They're constantly pursuing you every day. They don't let up. They don't let up. So every day, every day, over and over, they're pursuing you and you feel the pursuit and you haven't had love for you. All of a sudden, you feel like, "Wow, this guy is giving me so much attention. It feels so good." I really want you to pay attention to that. Why is it all of a sudden he doesn't want to let you out of his sight and when he doesn't take no for an answer? Both of these may sound at the time really great. It's like, "I know I want to be with you. You got to be with me. I need to be with you." You don't need to see your friends. It will come up in different ways. These are red flags.

When you're being pursued, it feels good. That's why when you think, "If I'm so smart, how could I have gotten into this?" This is what happens, because you're human. You like someone or have a man or somebody show you lots of attention, to think that you're important, to think that you're the most important person in your life, but just notice that why are they pursuing me so much? Why can't they take no for an answer? Because that will come back later and will start to go deeper into your relationship.

So here's something else. She said, "They're passionate. They care about you. And they'll say things to make you feel so beautiful and that you're still important in their lives. And then they want to introduce you to maybe their friends, to their family. And they're kind of accelerating things."

This is a really common trait. All of a sudden, you're the most important person. They're introducing you to key people. They are giving you presents and other kinds of gifts. And it's like, "Wow, I've never had anything like that before." That's another thing. If you're thinking, "Oh, this guy must be really into me. This guy is just so fabulous. I've never experienced this before." In common vernacular, they call it love bombing, but we don't see it as love bombing. We just think, "Wow, this guy is so kind and so generous. Because I haven't experienced this before, this must be the real thing." These are key classic characteristics of a narcissist. And why? Because you are a normal human being who likes attention. It's not like you're attention-grabbing, but it feels good.

And then it starts to go a little bit even deeper. And so they want to maybe, like in her case, "You want to build a business with me. We're going to be successful," because he knew how smart she is and he wanted to take advantage of it. But you're not thinking that. You're just thinking, "Wow, he's that interested in me. He thinks I'm that great that we can do this together." And before you know, it just gets deeper and deeper. And then they want to marry you. They want to take it deeper.

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So in her case, she's German. She was living in Germany. They had this long-distance relationship. She was coming to the United States. Primarily, the first reason she was going to the United States, she got this visa to be in this company she had wanted to work with for so long. It was the largest US company servicing animals. That was her love. That's what she dreamed of. If you're a foreigner, if you can't appreciate, when foreigners want to come to this country to build their lives, I mean, this is like a dream come true.

And then he convinced her to give up what she was so enamored with. I gave up. Mine was the opposite. I gave up my family, my friends, and my booming fabulous career to move across the ocean to the Middle East, to be with him. While they were still in the States, she felt like, "Oh, I'm the queen." And he was so proud of her. He shows her off, right? He'll tell everybody how great she is to everybody else. And that they're going to get married. This is another trait. They tell everyone how proud they are of you. So then everyone just thinks, "Well, this girl is fabulous." But not only that, how wonderful he is to be boasting about this woman in his life. So now all of the friends are now into the cycle of "What a great guy." This is why it's so difficult when you want to leave because now they have convinced everybody and showed everybody that he's wonderful and you're wonderful. And they don't understand, well, why do you want to leave this wonderful man?

Then things start to change. She said, "Then I wasn't allowed to go to events anymore." Listen to her words. "I wasn't allowed." They make it difficult for you to leave, to leave the house, to go anywhere that you want to do. And he started to order her around and say, "Well, you're going to stay here." Now, mine didn't order me around in that way, but he induced such guilt that I would leave the house to see a friend. "Why are you abandoning me?" I mean, those are pretty strong words. So listen to their words. They got her in. They get you in and you think it's wonderful. You're not looking for a narcissist. This is why every woman should be listening to this podcast. Not that there are narcissists around every corner. There are more kind men than there are narcissists. But when you get an experience with one, you will never forget it and your life is changed forever. So why not share this with your friends so they don't get into it, so they know what these warning signs are?

So she started to kind of get smaller. And she said her friends didn't recognize her. Well, in my case, my friends didn't see because I was overseas. They didn't see me. Then he just dumped her. He built all this, but he expected her to work for him still or still work together. He got what he wanted as like, she kept having to have permission to do something. That's that feeling. "I need to have permission."

So if you're in a relationship or you were in a relationship or you just listen, if you feel like you have to ask permission to do anything in that relationship to see your friends, call your parents, call your children if you were married before, if you go out with friends, if you feel like you have

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to ask permission, that is a sign of an unhealthy relationship. This is a sign of somebody who's controlling you. You are an adult and you don't need to ask permission how to live your life. And that's how they start to create this control. They limit who you can go out with until you're completely surrounded by them 24/7 into their beliefs.

But now this experience that she had, this experience that I have had, and the other women on this podcast, now when you realize what's happened, you go into kind of a shock and then you start to learn. And you learn about yourself. And this is what I do, is helping you learn about yourself, not to judge yourself, but to help you grow and evolve. And then you end up creating a more magnificent life than you ever thought possible. So that is the road.

You are a victim at one point. And it's your choice whether you want to stay in a victim like you can't get out. But my plea for you is to understand that you are much better than you give yourself credit for, that you can create a life that was better than you had before, that you will come out stronger, you will know who you are, what you deserve and how to get it.

This is your life. You deserve to be treated with kindness, and it starts by being kind to yourself. And that means owning your own values, setting clear and healthy boundaries, asking for what you want. Not allowing anybody to tell you how to live your life. And when you are in a healthy relationship, that's how it is.

You live your life you get to be... 100% you.

So this is the beginning of your freedom path to be empowered and showing up as 100% you.

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The only way to move forward and create an impact in your life is to know where you're at, where you want to go and what's holding you back. Get started by taking the Freedom Fulfillment quiz. In 4 short minutes, you'll discover where you are, where you want to be, and what you'll need to do. If you are serious about evolving into a new empowered you, who can show up as the confident woman she once was, or wants to be then start now. Your life is waiting for you.

Go to: [FreedomFulfillmentQuiz.com](https://www.FreedomFulfillmentQuiz.com)

Today we're going to meet Diana Lammerts, a professional journalist, Public Relations Expert and lover of animals, who hit bottom before she was forced to reflect, evaluate and empower herself so that you can too follow her steps to empowerment and owning who you are.

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Diana will be here in a moment and first ...

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Thank you for downloading the Vulnerable to Valuable Podcast produced by the Love is Kind Network. We're just starting out, Please subscribe. Every 5 star review on iTunes and every share will help our mission to impact 100 M women worldwide who have lost their voice, value and authenticity in narcissistic, controlling and abusive relationships. Will you help us achieve that goal?

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Now let's go from Vulnerable to Valuable with Diana Lammerts.

**Rosie Aiello:** And here we are. Welcome, Diana, to the Vulnerable to Valuable podcast.

**Diana Lammerts:** Hi, thank you. Nice. Thank you for having me.

**Rosie:** Oh, it's good pleasure. And I want to just tell my listener about you before we get started here. Diana Lammerts is a trained journalist, a former radio news anchor, and advice editor in chief, who swapped sides to become a public relations pro in 2010. Diana was born and raised in Germany, but lived in the United States for several years. She loves animals and worked for one of the largest US animal service agency. Her motto is, "As an individual, we can change 1000's of lives. When we merge our ecosystems, we can change the world." That's so beautiful. Be in the now because living in the past is so yesterday.

Welcome. I love that. Every time I read that, this was like, oh, yeah, I think I'm going to print that out and put it on my wall or something. It's just being the now because living the past is so yesterday, and what a great lead into this whole theme of moving forward in your life after a narcissistic relationship, because the past is yesterday. And that serves no purpose in living in the past. But let's just tell people a little bit where you are now and what your path was just to give a context to how far you've gone.

**Diana:** So the topic "Narcissists" has been a topic my whole life, basically, starting from the mother who was a Narcissist, which I didn't know, and through relationships, because that's the only thing I knew, was how to deal with a Narcissist. And even looking back at former relationships, it turned out they were narcissists, not always full blown out or abusive narcissist, but they have very narcissistic features. And I only learned about all of that after my last relationship. That outcome was so far the worst and the best at the same time.

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**Rosie:** Yeah, it's interesting that I think this is so common, especially if you're a child, right? As an adult, I didn't know what narcissism was. It took me a very, very, very long time to know. I mean, I just knew that it was an abusive relationship. But even the word "narcissism" was still not really known to me. But as a child, you just know it is what it is, right? Your relationship is what it is. There's no words in it. "I don't know if that's good or bad," right? Just what it is. And so now your world has been created at such a young age. That's what you're looking for. That's what you know, anything else? That seemed kind of bizarre, even if it was good. So how did you discover your mother was a narcissist?

**Diana:** Well, up until that one relationship, I didn't even know what a narcissist was. So that last relationship, basically, I met someone while I was in the process of moving to the US. And that individual became a friend. And we talked every day and I thought, okay, if someone is pursuing you for six months, every day and is so kind, that must be the one. If someone is really in love with you and doesn't take no for an answer, that person is really passionate about you, right? And cares about you, because they want to know, and they make you feel so beautiful. And they are always encouraging and are always there for you. And he introduced me to his parents, and everything was beautiful. I got presents as well. And so yeah, it was just amazing. I never had anything like that.

And then what happened was, I worked really, really hard for my work visa in the US. Like I work from Germany at night and during the day to make it happen, right? I was totally in my peak state. You know where it doesn't matter how much you sleep? You have a goal and you want to get this goal.

And after one and a half years, I got this goal. I was so fortunate to get one of the H1 visa, which is for people with special skills. And so I moved to the US and that person was from the US. But after, I think about six or seven months, he said, "I'm going to move to Germany, do you want to come back with me?" And I said, "I just got here, I have the most amazing job. I'm helping save lives. I love the people here." But then I thought, okay, and I didn't realize it at that point, but I was already brainwashed.

**Rosie:** Yes.

**Diana:** It was, I didn't even think about all of that. I only remember this one time, when he said, "When you come in with me, never tell me that you will regret it and that I made it." I was like, "Well, if you don't give me a reason, why would I say that, right?" So that would have been the first red flag, like a huge red flag. And so I did that. And I quit my job. I sold everything. I had some things in storage because at one point I wanted to come back. I also gave up my visa for



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this. And I gave up the animals. And I gave up my team. And it's not that he made me. I just did it all voluntarily, right? I wasn't forced,

**Rosie:** Isn't that, it's interesting, right? And as you may be, when you hear this over again, it's so interesting how they just have like-- okay, I mean, this was something you had worked so hard for your dream. You get the special visa, the H1 visa, right? The H1 visa, to work with this organization that you dreamed of. You had a great team. Everything, that was your dream. And then he made it, he turned it around that you didn't need that goal. You needed his goal, right? But it was all just so subtle, because it's like, he's going to your country, your home country. It's like, "Well, gosh, the guy is going to do that. He must be really special." But then what you gave up, right? Your dream, your visa, which is no easy peasy, not a piece of cake to get. All of that to go back home. And I mean, just as you're saying that, it's like, I did the same thing, just differently. But I did exactly the same thing. So then you go back to Germany now, and?

**Diana:** Well, he saw my potential, and he said, "You're going to come with me? Or do you want to come with me? Do you want to build a business with me? We're going to be successful. I know we can do it." And so then I went, and I moved to a city I didn't know. And I lived there. And then suddenly, there was hardly any furniture in the apartment. And I was like, okay. So I still had some money saved up. So I bought some furniture, and then, I was--

**Rosie:** Were you living together?

**Diana:** Yes, yes. Because I had no place to live anymore because I moved to the US, right? And then I moved back.

**Rosie:** Right.

**Diana:** So, you know, he wanted to marry me. And so I was like, "Okay, wonderful." Everything was amazing. And then I arrived in Germany. The first days, I was-- even when I met him in between in New York, like I was the queen and everything was great. And in Germany, he was so proud of me. And he told everyone, "This is my wife or now-girlfriend, soon to be wife," even to my sister. And it was so amazing. And then slowly it changed. And then I wasn't allowed to go out with everyone anymore, then I wasn't allowed to go to events anymore. And then we would go to a different city, but he said, "You're going to stay here"

Talking about this sounds so weird because it's like a different life. It's like talking about a different person because I was a different person. My friends didn't recognize me. And the people that met me back then don't recognize who I am now. And now I am just the same person I was before. But they didn't know that.



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And eventually, what happened was that he said, “Well, I found someone else, you need to go.” But I was still allowed to stay there because I had no place to go. I was supposed to still work for him. And at that point, I was willing to do that. I was truly willing to do that. Until, I don’t know, there was a time when I was by my own, on my own. And I started listening to the secret. And from that, I started researching on the behavior. And then I found the definition of Narcissist. And then I realized more and more what I got myself into.

And then at one point, I left. I left. I ended up on my friend’s couch, and I had no job because I gave up my job in the US and I work in his business. I had no job. I had no place to stay. I had nothing.

**Rosie:** It’s so fascinating. It’s like this brainwash, but it’s just like, there’s this magic pill that they give us and we’re just like robots. We just completely lose ourselves. And mine is, again, similar but different. I left. I’m from the United States, and I left my family, my friends, my career, everything. I had a booming career in corporate finance in Silicon Valley. I moved overseas to be with him. And just like you, I love how you said, “I wasn’t allowed.” There’s the word “allow,” right? Like, you had to have permission. Same thing, I had to ask permission. It was always such an ordeal. I worked for his company, because we were in Saudi Arabia. I worked for his company part of the time. But if I wanted to see my friends, there was already a restrictive society, I couldn’t get out. And so my world got smaller and smaller, and your world got smaller and smaller. And this is such a key aspect of a narcissist. They make it difficult for you to see other people so they can have total control over you.

But they use it in words like, I don’t know how yours was. It’s like, “Oh, well, why are you abandoning me?” or “Why are you leaving me? You know, I want you here.” Sometimes they’ll couch it in a way like you start to feel guilty for leaving, for having a life. How did that show up for you?

**Diana:** He always tried to push me to a point where I would snap, but I didn’t. And learning more and more about narcissism showed me that-- gaslighting, for example. And it reminded me like my mom did the same, and so two of my former partners, and I was like, “Wow, that’s a pattern. I need to get out of this.” And I’m not the victim. I’m not. Because sometimes people say when I tell the story, “Oh, so you’re victimizing yourself.” No, I’m not, but it’s part of the story. I have to tell it, it’s just part of the story.

And then I learned about it, and I educated myself, and I was like, okay. And also at one point, I had to let go. I had to let go of the money that he owed me. I also decided to let go of my mom. I forgave her. She loved me as much as she could, which wasn’t much, but she didn’t know any better. So if you don’t know any better, that’s the same why we chose Narcissist because we didn’t know any better. And that helped me a lot. That really, really helped me a lot going into

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the self-growth. And also, one of my dear friends because-- I went back to Vegas because I still had to sell some of my things, because I left quite promptly. And he said, "Diana, you know what, you have to go get your hair and your nails done. And I want to see you happy again." And he's a little bit on the spectrum. And this is what he knew what usually makes women happy. So he wasn't trying to be pushy or whatnot. But that was his way of saying, "I want to do something good for you." And he's the sweetest, sweetest person.

And I did that. And I was smiling again and I felt better. And my self-doubt got less, became less and less and I became more and more the person that I used to be. And then I just said, "Okay, now I have to start from scratch, which was perfectly fine. I just got to do it." And then when I was back in Germany, I started volunteering with another animal shelter, because dogs are just the best. They just love unconditionally. And I was sitting on my friend's couch, and she was jokingly saying every day, "So when I leave for work, you sit on the couch. When I come back from work, you sit on the couch, but not being lazy. You're always working on getting things done." I'm looking for freelancing, jobs, and whatnot. And so I was always busy. And that helped me.

And yeah. And then slowly after, I think it was just three months later, I was back on my feet. I got my own apartment again. And yeah, it was amazing.

**Rosie:** Yeah, it is amazing, the whole process and the whole cycle. And I'm so glad that you, you know, you gained some awareness. You started because when you-- this is, you know, we keep making excuses for their behavior. And it's like, "Well, he's not bad all the time," right? "And it's good and he's so kind," and just kind of makes you all kind of messed up. And you're just like, questioning yourself. I was talking to somebody this morning about this whole the same topic.

When did you feel like you were your most vulnerable during the process? Or what caused your vulnerability?

**Diana:** I felt very vulnerable when I learned about a year later that he planned all of that. He planned it throughout the whole six months where we talked. He said, "I have someone. She's very, very good at what she's doing. She's going to make us rich. She's going to make us successful. She's a powerful woman. And I'm going to get her over here. And then I'm going to kick her out because she's too old. And I want to have children, I'm going to get someone younger and better." And that really hurt that it was all planned. And that was a step back.

But honestly, if that hadn't happened, I would have never found out what a Narcissist is probably now because I did a lot of self-growth. But I wouldn't have forgiven my mom so soon. I wouldn't have forgiven my other partners. And unfortunately, one even died. And because he

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was still so narcissistic that he fell for the narcissist drug what I call it, which is cocaine, because it's the perfect drug for them. So yeah, unfortunately.

And I still have love for that person and his family. And I'm just good with everyone now. And that's what I always told my team. We have to live with them a fraction of our time. They have to live with themselves the whole time. And how hard must that be? And sometimes that is always being under this pressure and whatnot. So I rather feel sorry for them than feeling sorry for myself, because I can escape. I can escape. I learned a lot. I learned so much. I learned so much about myself, I learned that I need to be cautious that there are warning signs that you don't want to ignore. It doesn't make me very sensitive when it comes to other people when they have certain traits. Yes, it does. So maybe I'm a little bit more cautious when I see certain signs than I would have been back then. But other than that I'm just so I'm happy.

I would have never visited my friends in Trinidad. I would have never experienced Carnival in Trinidad, which is amazing, by the way. So if you haven't been there, go there. The people are amazing. The food is amazing and Carnival over there is the best. But I would have never experienced all of that. And that would have been a shame.

**Rosie:** Yeah, it's interesting because on the one hand, we experienced quite traumatic and unpleasant experiences, you and your family, your mother, and then in personal relationships. But having experienced it now, I mean, of course, now I can look back when I first arrived and I was not in that frame of mind. But now, my life is so much full, right? Your life is so much full. You're so much more aware. You know so much more of who you are, who you really are, and what you deserve. Whereas we're all kind of living unconsciously, just kind of bobbing along, not being aware that oh, we have desires and goals that are ours that we can own and have our own voice. I'd lost my voice for so long.

So one of the things you put down, and I think it's so important part of the whole recovery, and your friend in Las Vegas kind of mentioned, it was self-care. I think it was his own way of saying like, "Be nice to yourself." And he was like, "Yeah, okay, do your nails, whatever," because that was his way. But you know, what are some of the other things that you did that our listener can maybe learn from that you did for self-care that just kind of nurtured yourself through the process of when you're healing?

**Diana:** I invested in myself and in my self-growth. I learned a lot about the topic. And I learned that we all have a little bit of Narcissistic features in us, which is okay.

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Every episode I offer a mini masterclass on the 11 Freedom Fulfillment Pillars. You can get the guidebook to all 11 Freedom Fulfillment Pillars right now. Simply go to [VulnerabletoValuable.com](https://www.vulnerabletovaluable.com) and hit the subscribe button to get your copy.

The only way to move forward and have an impact in your life is to get awareness of where you're at, and discover what's holding you back. Following the 11 Pillars I was then able to develop strategies to create my business, become an international award-winning entrepreneur, speaker, and author, find the love of my life and I use these pillars every day to create a fulfilled life. These are the same ones that I use with my clients. And now they are yours free. Go to [VulnerabletoValuable.com](https://www.vulnerabletovaluable.com) and subscribe.

And we're back with Diana Lammerts, a professional Journalist, who became a Public Relations Pro in 2010.

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**Rosie:** There's healthy narcissism, right?

**Diana:** Right. And it's just like, healthy, anything else? You know, I love to eat chocolate. If I eat too much, it's unhealthy. Right? But chocolate itself is not unhealthy.

**Rosie:** That's right.

**Diana:** I gave myself the freedom as well to travel. I experienced things and people and cultures. And yeah, I did what I felt was right for me. And I've learned as well that even if you're in a partnership, you don't have to give yourself up. You can compromise. But if you learn that you're not growing together, it's okay. It's just not the right person for you. It might be the right person for someone else, but not for you, which is perfectly fine. And then you can just leave or you decide you do grow together. And then that's fine as well. But yeah, that lots of things. Like, I made sure I felt good. I worked out and it's basically-- it's funny, I'm on TikTok as well. And when you watch the videos, someone said, "Well, when guys break up and they go through a breakup, they usually, you know, let themselves go. When women break up, they build a business, they lose 20 pounds and they save the world." That's what we do.

So I built my business. I got back into PR and I realized that I missed that as well. I missed being creative. And I learned that everything makes sense. And I learned that I'm not the most patient person, but patience is something that we need in order to get what we want to get. And, yeah, it's an on-going process. It's an on-going process.

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**Rosie:** It is. Thank you for sharing that because the self-care which I really liked, as you said, you know, you invested in yourself about learning about everything. And that's so important. I think people maybe don't think about that, being self-care, but learning about yourself is where it all starts. And the exercise and the traveling things that really made you feel rejuvenated. It seems like that's what was really feeding you. And for people to just listen to their own voice, start to listen to their own voice, what feeds them, what brings them joy.

Tell us a little bit about your experience with like, you know, trusting again, and learning how to trust, trust yourself, trusting decisions, trusting other people, because that's kind of a journey that I am also still on.

**Diana:** Yeah, that is an on-going journey. That is always. It's like when you have an animal that has been mistreated, they still come to you. They still have unconditional love for you. But then you do something and you don't realize you did it. And then suddenly, they're getting skittish, right? And it's the same. And I think it's important to communicate, open communication, telling people, "Okay, so this is what happened, no judgment, this is just what happened." And then there are situations where I can act a certain way because it triggers something in me, and I will let you know that it triggers something in me, and because, how would you know? Right?

**Rosie:** That's right.

**Diana:** I mean, I can't tell everyone everything because I don't know if it's ever going to happen. And sometimes I don't even know myself.

**Rosie:** Right, exactly.

**Diana:** And when it happens, and that person knows, and they know how I react, they would ask me or after, "Why did this?" They get used to ask me like, "Okay, why are you doing this? Like, what's happening?" Alright, I'm realizing that myself, and I said, "Okay, please don't do this. I don't know why. But this is triggering something in me, and I don't really appreciate it." And usually, either the person says, "Okay, I'm trying not to do it anymore, or not on purpose. Maybe sometimes it just happens." And if that person says, "I don't care," then I said, "Okay, thank you for letting me know. In that case, I don't need you in my circle because you don't add value." And that is something really, really important. That is something that I learned. If anything doesn't add value, it has to go.

**Rosie:** You don't need people to be bringing you down. I mean, that's the whole thing. It's like, now we become aware as like, I'm very aware of the people who I hang out with. I don't have time for toxic people. I don't need that. I hang around with people who bring me up, who bring me joy. And I tried to do that for them as well. Life is too short.

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I want to get back to the animals because I want to tell you a story. I had a bird when we were in Lebanon. And my daughter wanted an animal. We couldn't have a dog where we were living. So, we had seen this movie. It was a really, really cute movie about a parrot. So we talked about it, we said, "Okay, you know, we'll get this bird." And my husband and I had gone down to the shop to look at it. And like what you're saying, it was very much afraid. So I imagine it was caught in a very cruel way. I will never own a bird again. But I didn't know that then.

And so the first month we had the bird, it was just crawling on the cage. I would say it was shrieking like within the jungle. And it was just, I could just tell it was afraid and my heart was breaking. And I didn't know what else to do. So I sang it lullabies. And in a month's time, it just started to calm down and started to feel safer and safer. And it was so interesting to see this transformation in an animal.

And then, you know, sometimes my husband will get upset and it's just beyond belief. But anyway, he would scream at the bird for eating his seed wrong. Don't even have me explain that. And the bird would go to the far end of his perch as possible from where my husband was. It was just amazing that that animal could sense what was good and what wasn't.

**Diana:** And they can.

**Rosie:** And they can, and for us as human beings to be treated that way. If an animal, an innocent animal, is sensitized to that, I can't imagine a human being. So in the trust, I mean to this, I'm in a very kind and loving relationship. We've been together for quite a few years now. Something I could have ever imagined. However, I am still when I'm with men or have to talk to men, I have that little not quite-- I don't quite trust yet. You know, I'm not used to being around men and being equal like a woman anytime. But a man, I still hold back a little bit until I really get to know them. I don't have very many men Facebook friends. I have to know them. I don't ever like a strange man on my Facebook, but even in person.

So that's been a long impact, right? This is the impact of that. But it's a process to learn what makes you safe. And I love what you shared, is that you asked. You know, you tell them, "This is bothering me. I may not know why. But this is bothering me." And I think this is helping you get your voice back and for women to hear that. You can say that to whoever. If something is bothering you, voice it, even say the confusion like you did. "I'm not really sure why, but, you know, if you can't do that, you know, if you can stop doing that." Or as you tell them, you start to understand, "Well, okay, that's not a big deal." And you can move on.

Thank you for sharing those examples, because each example, that can help somebody here, "Oh, yeah, I do that. I didn't know I could ask a question or just say what's bothering me,"



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because we've lost our voice. And that's empowering. That's an empowering statement and behavior that you do.

What about, I didn't even know what boundaries meant, or what they were, or anything. Have you evolved in that process, the boundaries?

**Diana:** I have, and I have friends who helped me keep my boundaries. So whenever I say, "Okay, those are my boundaries. This is clear." But then at one point, like, "Ah, no, it wasn't. No, you can just like nah. Come on, it doesn't matter." And then you kind of, yeah, paddle back. And I have two good friends who say like, "No, you said that. That's what we're doing." I said, "No, that's not fair. I want it a different way." "No, yeah. Like, you set the boundaries. And this is how we do it now."

**Rosie:** They hold you up to what you want.

**Diana:** Exactly. And those are the friends you need. Those are the friends you want. You don't need many friends. But those are the friends. And honestly, this is another thing. Going through this, I have learned that I have the best friends ever and family is not blood. Family can be anyone in your life. And it's so amazing. They are there. They were there. And then you know who your friends are. And with me, it's not that I don't trust men. As I said, like, it can be women, can be the same. And so I think it's trust, in general. But I also like to be open-minded.

So in the beginning, I do trust people, not with everything, but I generally, you know, when in doubt I trust them. But I'm just a little bit more cautious. Yeah, it's just what it is. You want to look back and see okay, what have I learned? And what are the good things that came out of it?

And when I said invest in yourself, that can be mentally, it can also be physically. You know what, if you want to get that Botox or whatever that facelift, get it if you feel like it. This is investing yourself. If this is helping you to make you feel yourself beautiful for that time, do it! It's okay to mess up and it's okay to make mistakes. And especially for Germans, like, we want to have everything perfect. But I learned that it's okay to make mistakes. And I was the one beating myself up over it and my friends were like, "Diana, it's okay." And then I ended up saying, "As long as no one is hurt, as long as no one died, and we can fix it, it's okay. It's okay. If it's materialistic, it's okay."

**Rosie:** Yeah, thank you for sharing that, Diana. I think one of the things I've learned through all of this is that I'm a human being. And we have the whole thing, right? There's this whole fantasy of perfectionism, this whole fantasy that you have to always be happy. It's just not realistic when something bad happens to you, it's normal to not feel good about it, right? We don't have to be happy about that. We can learn from it for sure. And as we evolve, it's like, there'll be good days



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and bad days. We have illnesses, we have this. We have the whole full human experience. And it serves no purpose, although we do it quite frequently to judge ourselves, criticize ourselves. And that's kind of the work that needs to be done.

What I do with my clients is to help them like, "Is this really a useful thought for you to have? Is this how you want to live your life?" And to know that you can live your life while you're healing, and we're all continuing to heal, but it doesn't mean you have to be on hold or you have to be perfect before you get out there again, or whatever. It's just, we just do it all together, all at the same time, the living, the making the mistakes and moving forward, the going backwards and falling down, having joy, celebrations, it's all together. And I think just realizing, all you need to do is just take one step forward for yourself, to honor yourself. You're a demonstration of that.

**Diana:** And the thing is, sometimes we think we can save them. No, we can't. And for some even, it's like an addiction. Like we can't leave, "I can't leave this person, I can't do this, I can't do that."

Choose something else instead. Like, channel it another way. So if you feel like you need to nurture someone and help someone, go and help children that are in need, or go and help animals that are in need, they love you unconditionally. And by that, they help you heal as well.

So you can get away from this person, because they make promises they never keep. They make promises they never keep wood, which is okay, because this is who they are. And I feel very, very sorry for them. Because imagine, I know how much pressure there must be. However, it does not serve me because they won't change.

And if there was, let's say, if there was an aggressive German Shepherd, and that dog would bite and constantly attack people, the majority would say he's never going to change. Maybe a behaviorist would say, "Well, with a lot of training and only a handler who can handle this dog and whatnot, there might be a possibility." Yeah, but then this person, like let's say your partner needs to go into treatment and get treated and actually see that there's something going on with them, then maybe there is a possibility.

However, leave and just channel your beauty, your beautiful soul, the love that you have, and give it to someone to make a change in their lives. The kids, they can still grow, that maybe has been mistreated as well. When you can show them that they can trust and that there is love and they become a better human being, because it's, hurt people hurt people. My belief is that, helped people help people. And when we start with our kids who are the most innocent creatures, we can make a difference. And if you start with one, that's it.

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**Rosie:** Yeah, that's wonderful. Such a great idea. If you feel like you need to care for somebody, because we can't cure anybody, we can't make them better, we can't love them better, to channel that energy somewhere else. That's a really great idea. I did something similar too. I volunteered at the Children's Cancer Center. And that was a great joy for me to actually do that. Not that I was trying to cure him, I was trying to save myself. It was really selfish. But you know, I think I did gain more than the kids.

Thank you so much for being with us and tell us how we can find out more about what you do.

**Diana:** Oh, what I do now is I actually help people create messages and get in front of the right person or right audience, and learn how to do public relations themselves, and help them understand publicity and the differences out there, because there's so much noise and so many words in Germany and whatnot. So I'm still helping because that's what I do.

I'm a go-giver. I read the book, *Go-Giver*, and I just love it. It's this book and *Think and Grow Rich*. Those are the most amazing books. Yeah, and that is what I do. Because I love this moment when people say like, "Oh, my gosh, I made it. I reached my goal," right? And which is not the final goal, because you always have a goal. Because otherwise, if we don't have a goal, we stagnate and stagnation is regress. But that moment is so amazing, so valuable, when you can feel the energy of your client, when they just start blowing, when they realize, "Oh, my gosh, we got here." I kind of imagined it must be like climbing Mount Everest and be like, "I'm here."

And so, yeah, it helps me with my background being a trained journalist, because I approach things differently. So, that is very helpful as well. And yeah, my goal is just to support people on their way to their goals.

**Rosie:** What's your website? And do you have something you can offer our listener?

**Diana:** Oh, yeah, my website is [DLMedia.info](http://DLMedia.info).

**Rosie:** Okay, it'll be in the show notes, too.

**Diana:** Yeah. You can come and visit and I offer a 15-minute consultation call that is for free. We can brainstorm and talk about your goals, and maybe see if you actually need PR, or maybe you need something else first. Or maybe you don't even need it. Or maybe you just need a little bit of brainstorming. That all depends. We can find this out in that call, and then just see what your actual needs are.

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And sometimes people say, “You know what, I’m not ready yet.” And others say like, “I really need this,” which is perfectly fine because the important thing is that this other person feels served and is happy. Because, for me, it’s all about integrity. I’d rather say I could tell you, you need this, but I don’t think you need this now. You might need something else first, like unique marketing first before you need actual PR. or you need both first, but this is like 75%, the other one is 25. So I’d rather be honest and have integrity than just telling something they don’t need because I believe in karma. It’s coming back. So that’s also another reason why I don’t mind what happened, because what goes around comes around. And I’m happy I’m not on the receiving end with that.

**Rosie:** It’s going forward. It’s all good. It’s all good. It’s such a pleasure to have you and to see where, you know, how you’ve created your life. And I think we just want everyone to hear that, that you’ve created your life, I’ve created my life, and we are creating. It’s not like a past tense. We’re continuing this creation. And you can too.

So tell me, what does Love is Kind mean to you, Diana?

**Diana:** Love is Kind means understanding, also means communication, self-reflection, and integrity and honesty. And you’re not losing when you’re giving. And everyone who’s listening, they can do it. And if you have a friend who’s in this situation, because I remember I told my friends, “Why didn’t you tell me what was going on, even though it was so obvious?” And they said, “We did.”

Have someone else talk to this person, because sometimes what we say is not what they hear and what they hear is not what we say, and the message is not clear. It’s like two people saying the same thing in different languages, not being able to understand each other. Have someone else talk to this person, and maybe they can get through. That will be-- I’m not saying that in general, sometimes it’s not a good idea. I’m not an expert. I just know that it helped me.

**Rosie:** Yeah, and this was good. This is why I do this podcast, is to get different ideas, and people can apply them, but really good. Well, thank you so much for your time, for your energy, for your suggestions, and how you’ve gone from Vulnerable to Valuable in your life.

**Diana:** Thank you for having me. It’s been a pleasure.

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That's it for today's episode, head on over to [VulnerabletoValuable.com](https://www.VulnerabletoValuable.com), and subscribe to the show. When you subscribe, you'll instantly get a special eBook.

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